Book Reviews

Toma de Aquino, *Expunere la Simbolul Apostolilor; Expositio in symbolum apostolorum*, Thomas Aquinas (*Exposition on the Apostles' Symbol*, text recorded by Reginald de Piperino), bilingual edition; translation, introduction and endnotes by Wilhelm Dancă, Polirom Publishing House, 2016, 219 pp.

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The first Romanian translation of *Expositio in symbolum apostolorum* (*Expunere la Simbolul Apostolilor*), Thomas Aquinas' sermon on the *Creed* completes the *Biblioteca Medievală* series, at Polirom Publishing House. The translation, introduction and notes are made by Professor Wilhelm Dancă, a Romanian Roman Catholic theologian with grounding studies in philosophy. The translation is based on the Latin text of the *Marietti edition* (Taurini-Romae 1954), derived from the incomplete Leonine edition and transcribed by Roberto Busa, and recently (2011) revised by Enrique Alarcón for Fundación Tomás de Aquino.

In the anticipation of the publishing of the third volume of *Summa Theologica* (IIa IIae, Polirom Publishing House, 2016), this annotated translation of Aquinas' *Expositio in symbolum apostolorum*, in the collection *Biblioteca medievala*, came fairly unnoticed. One reason for its minor echo is the fact that the work is indeed considered minor in Thomistic studies: as a sermon, its targeted audience is not the learned *uniuersitarii* to which the *Summa* was destined to, but the faithful attending Mass or street sermons; its language, style and treatment of subject are therefore calibrated to a wider understanding and to a more pragmatic purpose. It makes nevertheless for a valuable contribution to Thomistic studies in its homiletic treatment of the articles of faith – which are also addressed at the opening of the *Summa Theologica* IIa IIae. The *Expositio* also makes possible an overview on the echo of the controversies that shaped the *Creed* at the first ecumenical councils and to assess Aquinas' formidable knowledge of the development of the doctrine. It is an insight into 13th century scholastic disputes as well on topics related to the *Creed*, and is a didactic treatment of possible errors of the faithful that the understanding of the mysteries formulated in the articles of faith may occasion.

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Aquinas proceeds to the explanation of the *Creed* by taking the articles one by one, ordering them symmetrically: six articles on the *Greatness of God* and another six articles on the humanity of Christ. The structure is made transparent in the translation as each article receives a corresponding title, with clarifying subtitles: 1. *Cred într-unul Dumnezeu...* [*Credo in unum Deum*] 2. *Și în Isus Christos...* [*Et in Jesu Christum*] 3. *Care a fost conceput de la Spiritul Sfânt ...* [*Qui conceptus est de Spiritu Sancto*] 4. *A pățimit sub Ponțiu Pilat...* [*Passus sub Pontio Pilato*] 5. *A coborât în infern...* [*Descendit ad inferos*] 6. *S-a suit la ceruri* [*Ascendit ad caelos...*] 7. *De unde va veni să-i judece* [*Inde uenturus est iudicare...*] 8. *Cred în Spiritul Sfânt* [*Credo in Spiritum Sanctum*] 9. *În sfânta Biserică Catolică...* [*Sanctam Ecclesiam Catholicam*] 10. *În comuniunea sfinților, iertarea păcatelor* [*Sanctorum communionem, remissionem peccatorum*] 11. *În învierea corpului* [*Carnis resurrectionem*] 12. *În viața eternal...* [*Vitam aeternam*]. Each of the twelve articles, we are told in the introduction, is commented on by Thomas in four main steps, following the method of *reportatio* or *collatio*: 1) a didactic explanation of the treated article of faith is given; 2) possible objections, errors or heresies pertaining to the treated article are addressed; 3) the presented errors and objections are rejected; 4) the spiritual fruit of the mystery expressed by the article of faith is described.

In the *Expositio* Aquinas retains his sobriety of style and his conceptual rigour, textual features that Prof. Dancă expertly renders in the Romanian version. The titles above help us get an impression of some of the terminological variants that professor Dancă advances, emulating perhaps the etymological style of translations in other European languages: Professor Dancă uses neologism in most of the cases in which the Romanian language would indulge such a use: *spiritus* is translated as *spirit*, *caro* (and *corpus*) as *corp*, *incarnatio* as *încarnare*, *tentatio* as *tentație*, *aeternus* as *etern*, *inferi* as *infern*, *uisibiles et inuisibiles* as *vizibile și invizibile* (instead of *văzute și nevăzute*), *conceptus* as *conceput* etc. The spelling of *Christus* as *Christos* is equally courageous, and adds to the translational choices that may leave both the Catholic, and the Orthodox readership intrigued. It could come as a surprise for the reader of philosophy as well, as the translators of the *Summa* have been using so far, the more common and familiar terminology: *duh*, *trup*, *întrupare*, *ispită*, *veșnic*, *iad*, *zămislit*. The author justifies his choice in the introduction by expressing the desire to make the text hospitable to Romanian readership, as it is the first text on questions about faith coming from Aquinas into Romanian culture and language. One can indeed appreciate and encourage such attempts in finding new terminological solutions for Romanian translations. But this reviewer cannot wonder whether instead

of challenging the Romanian philosophical-theological vocabulary, with its brief history and uneven development, this translation will not rather incur the risk of remaining unquotable.

Bearing in mind the references in Aquinas' sermon to significant moments in the formation and the reception of the *Creed*, and for the better understanding of the arguments that Aquinas gives against various heresies, prof. Dancă delivers an instructive historical synopsis of the conciliar developments of the *Symbolum*, in the introduction, from its initially baptismal context, into the format we are familiar with today – *The Creed of Niceea* [*Simbolul niceean*], *The Creed of Constantinople* [*Simbolul constantinopolitan*], *The Defence of the Niceean Creed by the Council in Efes* [*Conciliul de la Efes apără simbolul niceean*], *The Development of the Niceean Creed in Chalcedon* [*Conciliul de la Chalcedon dezvoltă simbolul niceean*].

This historical placement of the *Symbolum* is completed by an overview of the interpretational tradition on the *Symbolum* that Aquinas is using. From the sources that Aquinas had a penchant for in the last part of his life and which are also traceable in the *Expositio* – Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite for the structure and Augustine for further analysis of Christian teachings, we are informed – professor Dancă dedicates a chapter of his introduction to the Augustinian *regula fidei*. This section makes for an opportunity of explaining the mainly epistemological understanding that Augustine gave to the concept of *fides*, as a model of knowledge that parallels philosophical knowledge. Taking as reference *Is* 7, 9 (*If you will not believe, surely you will not continue*), Augustine asserts that both theological faith and philosophical knowledge lead to certainty, while faith is “the result of the discerning thinking and of assenting will” (p.26). Augustinian echoes might be discerned in the conception that Aquinas presents in his prologue to the *Expositio* itself. This philosophical and theological excursus of professor Dancă is doubled by a chapter dedicated to the analysis of the homiletic genre in Aquinas' conception, as an active manifestation of *doctrina*: to contemplate means to transmit the contemplated realities to others (*contemplari est aliis contemplata tradere*).

In the last decades, the increasing interest in the works of Thomas Aquinas has been materialized into several translations into Romanian which aim at creating a Thomistic terminology that both fits with the extant philosophical vocabulary and that also creatively recovers a segment of the history of philosophy which Romanian culture never had the chance to experience historically; this terminology is not always unitary – symptomatic for the absence of a tradition of medieval translations, or of the different schools the translators are coming from. Prof. Dancă's translation, with its expressly con-

fessional neutrality, seems to be a challenging at rethinking some theological terminology and principles of translation of philosophical texts, which will hopefully lead to constructive exchanges in the still young field of Thomistic studies in Romania.